

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABIDJA 04666 100338Z

ACTION PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 AF-04 SSO-00 DHA-02 PA-01

/023 W

-----100344Z 107098 /14

O 100303Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3380

UNCLAS ABIDJAN 4666

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS USDEL SECRETARY FOR HODDING CARTER AND S/PRS FOR
BROWN FROM DERIAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: MAY 9 SAFIRE COLUMN

REF: STATE 105062

1. FOLLOWING IS MY RESPONSE TO SUBJECT NEWS COLUMN.
2. FOR HODDING CARTER: YOU'RE FREE TO EDIT AT WILL. HAND OF
WESTERN UNION AGAIN BARRED, THOUGH ONLY FOR DISCRETION'S SAKE,
TRADITIONAL OPENING RESPONSE.
3. FOR BROWN: ABIDJAN EQUIPPED WITH DIRECT DIAL TELEPHONE SERVICE.
4. BEGIN STATEMENT: MR. SAFIRE HAS LEVELLED SERIOUS CHARGES
AGAINST HODDING CARTER, A FRIEND WITH WHOM I HAVE WORKED FOR MANY
YEARS, AGAINST ME PERSONALLY AND THE ADMINISTRATION WHICH WE SERVE.
4. TO ACCUSE EMPLOYEES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OF MORAL
AND ETHICAL MISCONDUCT IS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER. COUPLING SUCH
ASSAULTS ON OUR CHARACTERS WITH ASSURANCES OF THE LEGALITY OF OUR
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ACTIONS DOES NOT MITIGATE THE INSULT TO THE INTEGRITY OF EITHER
OF US.

5. I AM ALSO OFFENDED, THOUGH NOT SURPRISED, BY MR. SAFIRE'S
FAILURE TO ATTEMPT TO CONTACT EITHER OF US BEFORE PUBLICATION
OF THIS SLIMY OFFERING. WHILE IT IS OBVIOUSLY UNREALISTIC TO
EXPECT MR. SAFIRE TO KNOW HOW RESPONSIBLE JOURNALISTS ACT WHEN

PRESENTED WITH DEFAMATORY QTE INSIDE UNQTE STORIES OF THIS TYPE, ONE DOES EXPECT SOMETHING MORE FROM HIS EDITORS AT THE NEW YORK TIMES.

6. CLOSE OBSERVERS WILL REMEMBER THAT MR. SAFIRE'S ACCURACY WAS RECENTLY FOUND WANTING IN A PIECE HE WROTE ABOUT THE STATE DEPT. MR. CARTER, AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT, CALLED THE STORY WHAT IT WAS, A LIE. MR. SAFIRE UNABLE TO MAKE AN UNTRUE STORY APPEAR TO BE THE TRUTH, SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND ANOTHER WAY TO RETALIATE TO THE STING.

7. HIS STORY, LIKE HIS DESCRIPTION OF HODDING CARTER, HAS SOME OF THE FACTS AND CONVENIENTLY OMITTS NINETY PERCENT OF THEM. I RELY ON HODDING TO SUPPLY THOSE LEFT OUT.

8. I WILL SAY, HOWEVER, THAT MR. SAFIRE'S SERVICE IN THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION HAS PROBABLY MISLEAD HIM INTO THE GREY LAND WHERE IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO HIM THAT PUBLIC OFFICIALS WOULD NOT TRY TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO EITHER OF US.

9. I WILL, OF COURSE, WITHDRAW ENTIRELY FROM CIVIC COMMUNICATIONS CORP. IF ANYONE BUT SAFIRE CONSIDERS IT EVEN SLIGHTLY IMPROPER. END STATEMENT.
STEARNS

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED USDEL SECRETARY.

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